

The use of Yoga in the Treatment of Addiction

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Introduction

Addiction is a global health concern that requires treatment and recovery maintenance. There is a growing interest in using Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) models as a form of addiction treatment (Bernstein, 2000; Chiesa & Serretti, 2014; Weerasinghe, & Bartone, 2016). The present study seeks to identify the experience of individuals who use the Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) mind body therapy of Yoga (NIH, 2016) and who are in recovery from addiction.

Methods

- Quantitative research conceptualizes yoga in combination with mind body therapies as a unit (yoga with mindfulness and mindfulness as related to yoga) and as physical postures. This delineates the whole person approach of the practice including exclusion of important spiritual components (Khanna & Greeson, 2013; Wersch, Forshaw and Cartwright, 2009) that could assist in recovery.
- Qualitative research methods is useful in understanding subjective experience of CAM. This study will use a phenomenological framework to outline the experiences of yoga, recovery from addiction and both yoga and recovery combined as a unit of experience. This will separate out phenomena that the quantitative research may convolute and will add to the CAM research framework (figure 1)

Sample

Participants

- Five to six individuals will be recruited via personal contacts and the snowballing method
- Participants are eligible for the study 1) > 1 recovery from addiction 2) > 1 practicing yoga.

Measures

- Participants will be interviewed using a semi-structured format
- Question topics 1) descriptions of the yoga practice 2) the exploration of the meaning of addiction and recovery 3) when yoga was introduced into their recovery 4) Yoga's influence on their recovery to date.

Procedures

- Interviews will be completed either through the Skype platform or at Middlesex University
- Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) will be used to analyze the interview data as outlined by Smith, Flowers & Larkin (2011).

Preliminary Results

- Two cases have been interviewed to date
- Preliminary Single Case themes are presented

Theme 1: Vinyasa Flow

“there different mindsets and then you get exposure to more than one mindset”

“identifying your self with the more genuine you”

“softens the physical body and in my experience also softens the emotional body”

Theme 2 : Addiction as a transitory narrative

“not identifying yourself as a particular thing, that you are just having an experience”

“you are where you are and how can you move forward”

“its not until we have a look at that and experience that then can we transform”

Discussion/Conclusions

- CAM approaches work specific to the individual and may vary across other cases
- CAM approach (yoga teachings + recovery) appears to be helpful in shifting mental processes necessary for recovery maintenance from addiction
- Continual analysis is needed

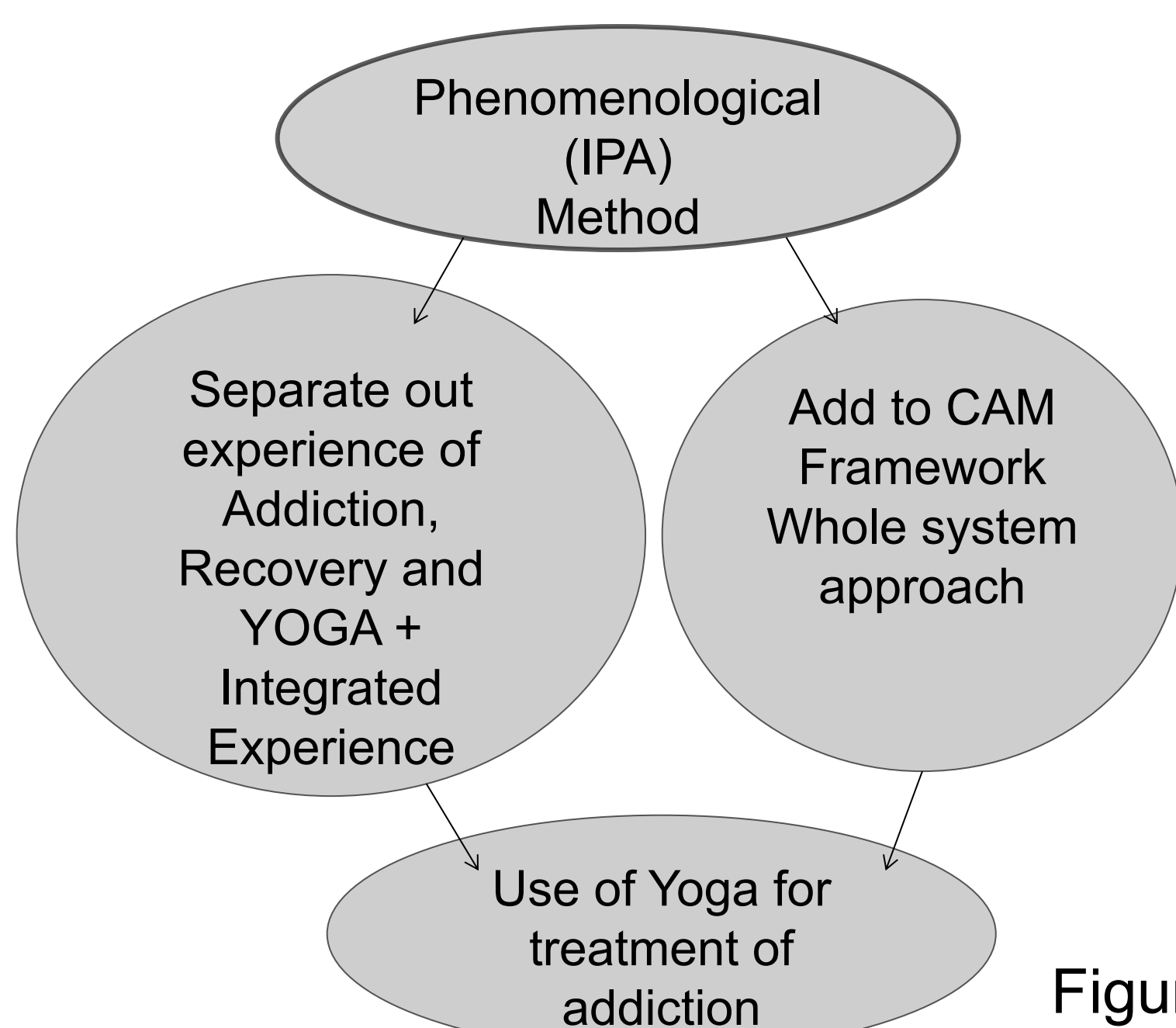


Figure 1

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